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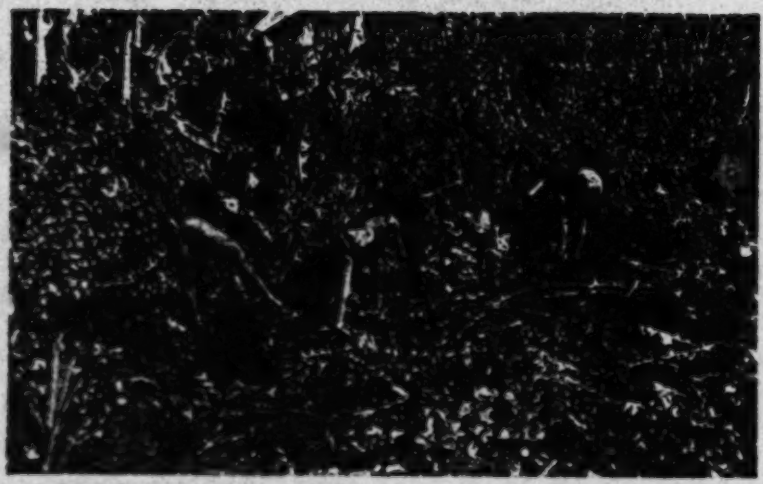

A group of girls and women cutting weeds at the end of the dry season preparatory to burning over.

The first weeding of the new corn crop.

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Melanesians the Atimelangers cannot be considered ghost-ridden. The 775
interesting point is that these potentially malignant dead are always
one's most immediate kin. People have two souls. At death one goes to a
village below if the death has not been violent. If it has been, the soul [766]
goes above (*adiy bong*), and a spirit-bird ceremony must be given for it.
The second soul is the one that loiters about the village boundary and
against which precautions are taken at the time of burial.

It is at this time that the soul is particularly dangerous because the 775
deceased wishes company. To placate it in this early and more potent 765
phase of malignancy and to relegate it to the village boundary there
are special feasts, the Hevelaberka held on the fourth day after death and
the Hevelakang on the ninth day after death. During these nine days a
few minor restrictions are observed by the family, including taboos on
salt, bathing, and sexual intercourse. During that time there may be also
one or two all-night gong-playing memorials (*sinewai*), including the
feeding of the guests who attend. It is during these nine days that there
occurs all the ostentatious use of pigs and the incurrence of debts, which [426]
must be repaid in subsequent years, or even generations, in a series of
feasts called Rolik, Baleti, and Tila (also called Ato in its final phase).
The first two of these feasts are named, significantly enough, after two
ways of preparing rice; the first refers to rice rolls, the second to small
woven containers in which raw rice is boiled.

The third feast can really be broken down into a number of cere-
monies. To the whole series I have given the name of the first ceremony,
(*Tila*), which means *string* and refers to the purchase of either a sheep
or a carabao for the final and supreme death feast after which the soul
of the dead is banished from the village boundary and thus from inter-
ference in human affairs. The motivations for giving payoff feasts have
already been discussed in the chapter on adults and institutions. The
pressure of creditors, prestige, and, perhaps most often, illness of de- [753]
scendants lead to these final ceremonies. The dead become impatient and
annoyed at the lack of postmortem prestige and manifest their displeas-
ure by making trouble for the living.

As soon as an illness is diagnosed as the manifestation of a displeased 755
soul, a small quantity of rice is offered it in a bamboo container raised 765
on a pole. From here on, plans for a payoff feast should get under way; 775
but frequently long delays occur, and it is hoped that meanwhile the
small original offering will stave off the soul. In addition, the dead may [241]
withhold good crops if the smaller garden feasts are not made in the 765
fields they have worked or if they are not named and fed at a series of 765
new-corn rituals owned by various lineages. All this placation of the dead 775

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754 those willing to discuss the matter. A dead man's tooth powdered into
[824] food or mixed with tobacco is supposed to be deadly. A fly that alights on such food will die; therefore, finding a dead fly in food offered by people whose good will one has reason to suspect, arouses suspicions of an intent to poison. All interest in this field, as in the field of witchcraft, remains on a remote plane and is stimulated only by some ill fortune. I feel quite sure there was no general pervasive malaise in this connection.
[521] At a time when Maliseni and his brother were absent a good deal visiting a village on the west slope of Kalabahi Bay, people whispered that they were purchasing poison there. So far as I know, however, the matter was dropped as a subject of gossip after four or five days.

Witchcraft and poisoning are definitely not major problems and are only minor causes, among many, of illness and death. There is absolutely no attempt, such as one often finds in sorcery- and witchcraft-ridden areas, to conceal nail parings, excreta, and all personal effluvia. On page 88 there was an account of a woman who thought her husband had poisoned her by using a piece of areca-nut shell she had tossed away. In an area really preoccupied with poisoning no woman on bad terms with her husband and in a strange village would have been so careless. The interesting aspect of these matters of witchcraft and poisoning is that they are present but largely latent.

789 The most frequently used form of malignant activity is the laying
685 of curses. These, as we have already noted, may be directed by one
●241 individual against another. It is not done secretly; quite on the contrary,
[578] it constitutes a public declaration of hostility where personal relationships have reached the breaking point. More common is the impersonal use of curses, usually after one has been the victim of theft by an unknown person. Since there is very little property, except garden produce, whose owner is not generally known, most such protections against theft are to be seen in fields, near areca and coconut palms, or near the place where a child, too small to identify anyone, has been robbed. Toddlers often wear anklets with a bell or a single-strand cord belt on which coins or beads have been strung. If these are stolen, and not infrequently they are, a curse will be erected by an expert on the trail where the child usually plays. A common sight in gardens is a bamboo pole bearing one of a large possible variety of sickness insignia. These may be erected before one has been victimized, as a warning to a potential thief, or after one has been victimized, in order that the unknown thief may develop that particular illness.

685 An instance of such procedure may serve to make matters clearer.
789 Fanseni Long Hair's son, a child of about two, had a coin stolen from

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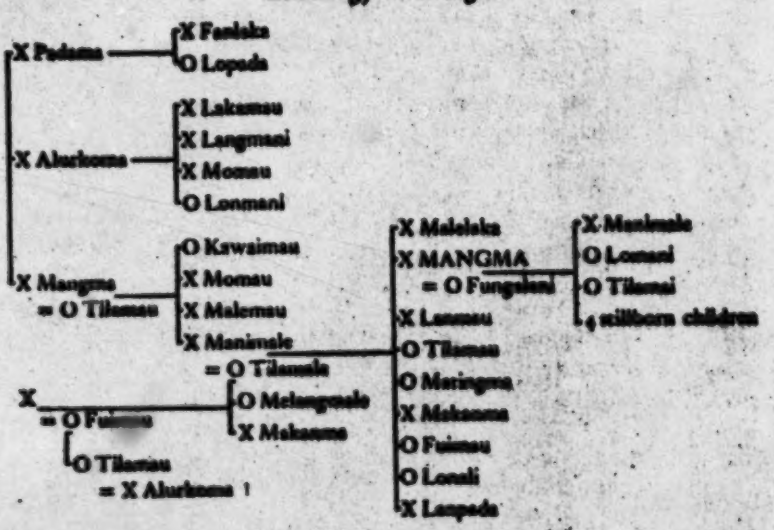
than hardheaded, practical devices for safeguarding property. Coconut trees are banded with sharp, downward-projecting bamboo collars which require considerable time and effort to take off. They are purely mechanical guards intended to delay a thief long enough so that the owner will have a chance to discover him.

Ripening crops, particularly those in more remote fields, are guarded by the owner himself, who will not hesitate to shoot night marauders. Many houses have a trap door at the head of the entrance ladder, which can be closed at night. Casual and unintentional entrance into a deserted house is discouraged by a lacework of green branches, which serves as a sort of "no trespass" sign. This prevents an intruder from pleading innocence should he be seen entering a house. All these very practical protections, which are used just as frequently as the supernatural ones, suggest that the Atimelanger does not rely to any great extent on supernaturalism for protection or vengeance against human beings. This does not mean that supernatural beings cannot protect or harm a human, but that human beings do not employ supernaturalism against one another to the extent that peoples in some other areas do. To be efficacious a system of automatically functioning curses would require a population whose sanctions were weighted more on the side of guilt than of shame. That curses are so casually treated bears once more on the point previously made that there is no very marked internalization of moral strictures. That curses are so impersonal causes one to suspect that the negative aspects of personal relationships may be as casual and shallow as the positive ones have been diagnosed as being. In the overgeneralized phraseology sometimes used one might say that modal personality in Atimelang does not have a paranoid trend.

In this connection also, people's relationships to a whole variety of evil spirits (*kari, loku*), wealth-bringing spirits (*nera*), and familiar spirits (*timang*) are in many instances casual and expedient. Every individual has one or more of these spirits whom he should placate. With the exception of a few specialists, like seers and prophets of the type described in Rilpada's and Malelaka's autobiographies, people ignore supernatural relationships until some misfortune occurs or some service is required. For instance, the village guardian spirit (*ulenai*) of Atimelang had had no carvings and sacrifices made for it in about sixteen years. In 1938 two others of the Five Villages made the proper sacrifices. This, combined with my obvious interest, finally led the Atimelangers to perform the ritual that theoretically should be performed every year or two. Similarly, men will completely ignore for many years the supernatural beings they have inherited from their parents until some mishap

Genealogy of Mangma



tar under which I was crouching, but it did not crush me. I was safe there.

When I was a little bigger [six to seven], Alurkai and I were friends. We were big enough to begin to use bows and arrows. We went to Aimau and shot Maugpada's dog. He ran after us and we couldn't run fast because we were still small. He took our bows and arrows and broke them up. He cut a stalk and beat us. [Question.] He was no kin. Mother and father did not quarrel with him. Maugpada said, "Now I have beaten you. Next time don't kill my dog."

Once my mother wanted me to cut * the fields, but I didn't want to, so she tied my hands together and left me in the house. I gnawed the rope through and ran away to Alurkoma [mother's mother's sister's husband, called grandfather]. I lived with Alurkoma for about a year. But I thought about my mother's tying my hands, and so I got part of a knife blade and pounded it to make it hard and went to cut the field. When it was all cut and burned over, my father and mother came to plant it. Then I cared for the field myself and weeded it. When the food was ripening, my mother came to harvest it. I remembered her tying my hands, and I said she could not take the food. She remembered

* This is a literal translation of the native term and refers to the clearing of weeds with a field knife.

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young corn [*nastingata-ateata*], sugar cane, mangoes, or cucumbers. This taboo lasts for three months, and in the fourth month I eat them again. Before eating them I feed my kuya hearth and place on it leaves of all these foods. After that I may eat. My father and older brother died about eighteen years ago, and ever since then I have kept this taboo. The kuya hearth is so called because I keep these food taboos before the Kuya feast. In this feast fire is thrown at a tree, and good crops for the coming year are requested. The kuya are spirits of all kinds of foods. They come from Piningkai [literally, "field head" or "top of the world," to the southeast in Batulolong]. These spirits stay in the sky. Mine are Kuyawa, Takatahafiki-Nalongtaiy, Tingtina-Fanfana, and Karilak-Kamaro. When I feed the kuya hearth I say, "Kuyawa, Takatahafiki-Nalongtaiy, Tingtina-Fanfana, Karilak-Kamaro, now let me eat my corn, cucumbers, squash, and mangoes and not be sick. May my thighs and my shoulders be strong. May I go running over large level places and long slopes and go straight through without stopping until sweat comes." [The rainy season is considered the season of illness. This sacrifice and supplication is made at the end of the rainy season so that the soreness and stiffness may pass.]

[At this point I tried to get him away from ethnography into personal anecdotes.] When I was still a child, a friend of mine, also called Mangma, asked me to come to his garden and help him build a house. When it was finished I asked him to come to the house I had built in my garden and roast corn. My house was made of slender bamboo. The thatched roof had collapsed, but we hunted rats, roasted corn, and ate there anyhow. At the new corn feast my friend Mangma invited me to come to fetch corn from his garden. The next day his mother cooked it for us. Then we went to my house to eat rats and corn. We said, "Now we can't play for a while, but when the corn work is finished, when it has been gathered and tied into bundles, we can play again." [Question.] This friend is dead now; he died after he married. When we grew up and married we didn't play together any more. We were no longer friends [in the sense of companions]. This friend, Mangma, was also from Karieta.

[How his mother died?] My mother's body swelled up and she died. That was about seventeen years ago. It was the year after my father and brother both died. They all died because we didn't give our Bayorka feast [part of the Tila death feast for ancestors] rapidly enough. We built the altar and didn't feed it. Then the village of Karieta burned down. We built another bayorka altar but didn't feed it. Then these three people died. I was married at the time.

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She said it was a chicken to raise, not to eat. Then mother cooked rice and added coconut meat and milk to it for the guests. After Moholo left, father was angry and hit mother, cutting the side of her face. Mother got a big wound. Then father gave mother a leaf as memorandum [*doli*] and said, "In seven days you pay back my bride-price. We are going to separate." Then father went away and stayed in Dikimpe. In seven days mother went to fetch water and I followed her, crying. I heard people coming from Dikimpe beating gongs. Father came up and said, "This is my child." He had brought a Kafoi chief with him. Father took my hand. I told him I was following mother, who had gone to fetch water. Father picked me up and carried me with him as far as Kokovi. There we met mother carrying water. Father said, "Kolmau, go call your family so we can reckon our debts. If there is a surplus I shall pay it. But in any case I take my child." So mother called her kin in Dikimpe and Atimelang. They all came and reckoned. Father only owed a Maningmauk moko. So the chief of Kafoi said, "Oh, you don't have much of a debt. If you wanted to divorce you could pay it, but the fault is a little yours too; so get a moko and pay a fine for your fault [and don't divorce, was the implication]." So father got a Kabali moko and paid his fine. He shot a chicken to pay the judges. The judges said mother had better go live in Dikimpe with my father. So mother and I moved to Dikimpe to live there with father.

February 12, 1939

Once mother planted rain corn and two patches of taro down in the ravine. People kept stealing the corn. We didn't know who they were. So I and Mangma went down there to guard it. Many rats ate it. We slept in a field house up on the ridge above the gardens and all day watched for rats. A bird came; we both shot at it but missed it. In the evening we cut wood and went back up to the field house. We were dozing off when Mangma dreamed that two old men were sitting near by, one on the slope above the house and one below the house. One was a little like his father, Fankaliets. One had a long beard all the way down to his waist. The one who was below said, "Shall we take the house down to the garden below?" Mangma woke up, rubbed my stomach to wake me, and told me about it. Then that night we didn't sleep there. We went to the village. Early in the morning father looked down and saw us on the verandah. He asked why we had come back, so we told him. Father said we were to go back to the garden, make a spirit altar, and feed it. In the afternoon father came with rice and a small chicken to feed the altar. After that we slept again in the

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159 field house and did not dream. [How old?] We were already grown but not yet married.

Once I, Lakamau, and Mangma went down to the ravine. We came to a large stone and saw a good rat-run. We smoked it out and got two rats. Lakamau and Mangma each took one, and then Lakamau suggested that we dig tubers. I saw a large tuber, dug it out, and left a sprout. I found another on the slope and dug that out too. Lakamau and Mangma found only small ones. When we roasted them, we found that the large tuber was no good because it was watery. So we roasted the others and ate them with the rats. That night I went home and dreamed that a female spirit came to me and said, "How does it happen you are brave enough to steal my food near my village? I don't come to steal from your gardens. If you come to dig in my gardens, you must leave the top and the bottom of the tubers and take only the middle part." The next day I told this dream to the older people. I said the spirit told me that the next time this happened the person would not return to the village.

Once Lakamau called me to go bathe. We went down into the ravine. When we finished bathing, Lakamau said, "If we burn off this area people will see us do it and we shall be punished. So you go and start a fire with your strike-a-light; put it in a coconut shell and set the shell in the weeds. By and by the fire will catch but no one will know we did it." [Premature burning, before weeds have been cut, is injurious to proper cultivation. The extent of this social misdeed was indicated by subsequent guilt dreams.] I did as he said and we returned to the village. After a while we saw the brush burning. So Lakamau, I, and many people went with our dogs to hunt rats. I didn't get any and came home. The next day early I went again. I saw a hole and thrust a piece of wood into it. It hit something soft. I looked and saw it was a dead snake with a half-swallowed rat in its mouth. I was afraid and ran back. Langmani was standing under the big mango. I told him what I had seen and went on. Then I came to a civet cat that had been burned. I called to Langmani and he told me to bring it along. The older people said, "Let's cook it and tell the women to cook their food. We'll eat here." That night I dreamed that a man came to me and said, "Why did my wife, who was carrying her child, encounter fire that killed her? You burned this area. You burned my wife and child. The fire also destroyed my dog, and you took it to the village and ate it. If you don't pay a fine, you will receive three months' punishment." The next morning I told mother, father, and Manifani. Then Manifani

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159 all that had happened. Then Atalan reached down to twist Thomas's ear and Thomas burst out laughing. He didn't give me money; he was just deceiving me. I left.

February 18, 1939

Once father and I made a garden. The corn was beginning to yellow amid the rice. The birds were eating the grain, so we made a field house [24] and slept there to guard the garden. One day father said he was going to the village for tobacco and he would be back that evening. When father reached the village, there were guests, so he told Manimau to stay with me. That evening Manimau came. The next day we decided [22] to hunt for crayfish in the ravine. There is a deep pool there, which we drained first. Manimau dug into some sand and a large eel bit his finger. He yelled that a snake had bitten him. I took a thorny branch and prodded in the hole. An eel as thick as my calf came out. We were afraid and didn't shoot it. We thought it must be sacred [*berbe*] because it was so big. We went home with just a few crayfish. We ate them that night and lay down to sleep. Manimau was still sitting up when he saw a person with a wasted body standing near him. Manimau woke me and told me what he had seen. In a little while Manimau said the man held his hand out toward him. I was afraid, jumped up to run, and struck the side of my head against a post. I felt sick and dizzy, lay down, and went to sleep. I dreamed too of the spirit, who said, "Whom shall we take, this one or the one who touched us [i.e., Manimau, who had touched the eel]?" I awoke and was afraid. I made a torch of bamboo and the two of us went back to the village to sleep with Manimau's mother at Lenmasang. In the morning father asked why we had returned, so I told him, "If you grown people want to guard the field, good. If you don't and the pigs eat it all up, we can eat the remnants. That's all right too." [He was indicating that he would not go back to the garden.] Father was angry about this, so I did not go home but stayed on at Manimau's for three days.

On the third night, in the middle of the night, Lakakaliets [Manimau's grandfather, not the Lakakaliets of the preceding story] woke us up and said, "You two children, don't sleep the whole night through. Wake up and think of what you can do. Go fetch something. Near our house Kolkaliets's squash is now large. It would be fine if you went and brought some here. We could cook and eat." So I and Manimau went. I picked a squash first and sat down to wait for Manimau, who was hunting for another one. As I sat watching I saw Langmani Bear [son of Kolkaliets] approaching on all fours. He came near but did not

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throw it!" We said, "You wanted to frighten us, so we had better throw this stone at you." Then she said, "You may take from my pile all the nuts you want to eat, but you can't gather nuts from these trees. My husband has already put a taboo on them. However, you may eat what you want now. I have gathered these to crack and sell at Likuwatang." So we went lower down the slope to hunt for nuts. There also people had picked them all and put them in heaps. I said, "I am afraid of all these heaps. Maybe an evil spirit has made them." My friends said, "In that case we had better follow the ravine to Lamning." We came to the top of a waterfall where there were some areca trees. One of the Kalmaabui boys climbed them, tied all the treetops together, and began picking the nuts. When I saw him doing this I was afraid that he might fall and we should all be accused, so I ran away. On the way home I picked a fern and ate it. When I arrived mother said, "Why are you eating this fern when we are harvesting rice? You mustn't do that." [Malelaka's parents had a harvest "medicine" that forbade eating ferns while the harvest was in progress, on pain of diminishing the crop.] She said, "Your rice is there in the pot. Take it to the village and eat." So I did.

The rice was all threshed and stored in the guesthouse where we were staying. A girl was burning off her weeds near there. The guesthouse caught fire and all our rice was burned up. Mother and father said, "Our rice is all gone. You had better pay for it with this child. We shall take her with us and raise her." But her parents were unwilling. They said they would pay with rice for the rice. I said, "Grandfather, we had better return to our village."

[I went back at this point and asked how he happened to know that evil spirits' teeth were like bats' teeth. He said he had once seen an evil spirit, and told of the encounter.]

I was sharing a field with another man called Malelaka and his wife, Kolaka. We had nearly finished tying the corn into bundles. I said they should start off with a load and I would finish the corn I had at hand and then follow them. While we had been working there in the field, Ruulberka had come to roast corn. When I started back I saw that Ruulberka was at Padabiki's field house. She was combing her hair. Over her forehead, where she was combing it, it was just wavy; over the ears, where she had not yet combed it, it was kinky. I then noticed that her mouth was pointed and that mosquitoes were flying in and out of her ears. I said, "Oh, that isn't Ruulberka. That is an evil spirit." When I drew my knife to kill her, she turned into a night bird and flew

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had caught the rat he would get the hindquarters and I the forequarters. We ate them and divided the belly. Semmani said the sweet potatoes were rice baskets and tubers [i.e., the two vegetable foods taken by men on their communal pig hunt]. We made believe there was a feast. There was a pointed stone like an altar stone, and we took the heart of the rat, mixed it with sweet potato, and fed the stone. Semmani said the tail of the rat was the hunter's share, which must be taken home to feed the women. So we pretended to give it to our two wives, but we ate it ourselves.

[At this point there was a half-hour's interruption, during which we looked at some cloth brought up for sale by coastal men. Fantan tried to get me to buy him a piece of cloth that he admired. He made ridiculously low bids on it and was refused. Then he returned to his story.] Thus we played until I was bigger and began to have thoughts. One day I was working in my garden and Senata called me to say that his bow had been broken by Manipada. I was angry and went to help him. I hit Manipada. Senata picked up a stone and pounded Manipada on the head with it. He was wounded and went to Manifani, the former chief of Dikimpe. We each had to pay Manipada a fine of ten cents. Another time a group of us were playing a ring game. Rilpada was angry with me and called me a redhead. Padalani, Lonata's son, helped me. He called Rilpada "Peppercorn hair." The two fought. Padalani and I had to pay a fine of a large corn bundle apiece, and Padalani had an extra fine of twenty cents.

By the time I was fourteen or fifteen I was working hard in the gardens and helping my father. By then I had thoughts. I went to Kalabahi, where I guarded Jacob's coconut garden for a year. Then I came back here to Atimelang and went to school for two and a half years. Now I have been married four and a half years. [Question.] I married after school was finished. Also before I married, I went to Pantar [an adjacent island] for six months. I followed the native schoolteacher there. He was good and asked me to come with him. In six months I returned. [Why?] I was not happy. I remembered my father and mother and came back. There was a schoolteacher there who hit us. There was no boat. Finally I got in one and when it was well offshore, I stood up and said I would return in seven days. When I got back to Atimelang a woman wanted to marry me, but I didn't want her. She followed me down to Kalabahi. When I got there, there was no boat, so I returned to Atimelang. When I got back, another woman wanted to marry me. Both of them asked for me. The first was Maingpen of Ka-

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People cooked
[358] mango pits and leaked them for three days, then we ate them pounded
[359] up or whole. We took banana stalks and roots and mixed them with mango seeds to make the death feasts. One time Fusiang and I acquade went to buy sweet potatoes, cassava, and corn at Fuiloka near Kabini. They took knife blades, necklaces, and anklets with them to buy food. They bought the whole cassava plant—leaves, stalk, and roots. For a knife blade they got only two or three cents' worth of corn or cassava. For a big necklace they got just ten small ears of corn. Many people had to share just a little corn mixed with many greens. When the men came home, they said, "Now we are hungry, and there are many people sick because of it. Save seeds and plant the cassava stalks." We cut the cassava stalks and the sweet potatoes into small pieces for planting. We
● [541] planted cassava stalks and sweet potatoes, and as soon as they were large enough we cut more shoots for planting. We kept planting corn too until there was much of all foods and people were filled up again.

[I asked how she herself reacted to this.] During this time mother wanted to cut weeds at Rangfai. Before she left she cooked some corn and put it in a basket for me. She said that she and Kawsimani were going to cut weeds and that I must stay behind. I said, "I had better go too because people will come and deceive me and eat my corn." But mother said, "Oh, if people come and deceive you, your father [Manimai, really her uncle] is a killer and he will come and kill them. You stay. Kawsimani and I will go cut the weeds." When mother left, all my playmates came to play with me. [Question. She was staying at the time with Manimai and his large family. Although the family with
[574] whom she was staying would have fed her, her mother said it was
576] proper during a hungry time, or at any other time, to leave food for a child with the host's family.] While we played, we talked of the cat's coming. [Here she repeated the children's story of the cat's coming
[577] nearer and nearer. She gave all the place names from Likowaang to
578] Aimalang until the cat entered the house and the children screamed. This was a favorite scare story for children. Lamani had heard it first from her mother, but this time the story was being told by Marwin, an older girl. Question.] I was not really afraid of the story; I just pretended to be frightened.

[I asked whether she remembered being very sick. This was an attempt to get the story of her badly scarred mouth.]

When I was small I wasn't sick. I got sick after I married, when my husband was already dead and my child was still small. I wanted to come back here, but my mother-in-law said, "No. I am your mother

sense that throughout Indonesia the concept of man's creation from mythical clay. In Atoni-lang this widespread motif is altered so that man is created from mythical rice and corn seeds, that is, man is made from food.

Alor food, rather than native currencies, is generally considered adequate pay for labor. The guest-workers who help cultivate a large rice field, who assist in erecting a lineage house, who attend memorial feasting ceremonies, or who participate in similar communal activities are all fed in return for their participation. When cooperative groups are formed for work in fields, the host of the day must furnish the midday meal.

There are other attitudes toward food which are perhaps less dramatic and instru-mentalized, but just as telling. If women are pounding rice or corn, any kernel which falls from the mortar is carefully picked up. Children of five or six have already absorbed this at-titude and are as meticulous as the adults of both sexes. A single bean left in a pod during shelling will be retrieved by children as well as adults. In clearing ground even unloved food plants will be carefully preserved. The meticulous fashion in which all food articles are saved and used does not correlate with any actual scarcity.

The natives also refer frequently to the annual "hungry period." This is the end of the dry season when there is no actual want but only loss of the preferred foods. For a month or two natives depend more on camote and sweet potatoes than on corn. Yet the natives phrase this as a period of food stress. In addition there were references to periods of famine as though they were an ever present threat. Careful inquiry revealed only two periods of shortage within the memories of people between forty and fifty. Both of these were due to famines which had disorganized the community so that for one season the fields had not been as extensively planted and as carefully weeded as is customary. There is no doubt that food, especially of the preferred sort, was scarce on these two occasions, but it was procurable by purchase in nearby communities and there is no evidence that anyone died of hunger. There is, in fact, no indication that hunger is ever necessary if a proper amount of foresight and in-dustry has been exercised. Perhaps one of the best indications that the concern over food scarcity is of psychological origin and not evidence in that there is no local hunger. No one ever experiences poverty or wealth in terms of land, although there is actually great variation between consumption units in the number and fertility of fields owned. This is no doubt a strong presumption with wealth as scarce in the culture. Data on the yield of the fields in-dicate that crops are good and on the whole adequate not only to feed the consumption units but also to provide surpluses for ceremonies to feasts.

In addition there is a singular upheaval feature in Alor. This concerns the so-called "good years" and "bad years" which come in alternate seasons. Theory has it that there is no use planting rice fields or any outlying plots during "bad years" because rodents will eat up the crop before it can be harvested. In the "good years" there are supposed to be fewer rats and there is a chance to lay in surpluses for large feasts. The theory of alternating years of the plagues has no basis in reality. Essentially the idea is a fiction that every other year one is the helpless victim of depredations on your food supply. As one might expect, there are

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a few people who ignore the theory and place cures cure fields or even considered rice fields during "wet years." For the social factors seems almost a rationalization of basic food attitudes in the individual. It appears to be almost an expression of infantile deprivation and help-lessness. However, it is only with the utmost caution that I would suggest in any particular case that individual psychology is the direct source of an institutionalized form.

Theft and fear of theft are ramified phenomena whose implications extend beyond their explanation in food, but the most common type of theft is from gardens. This may be explained on two bases: one is the early theft habits of foraging play groups of boys; the other is that food is one of the few types of property which cannot be absolutely identified and which can be used without much fear of detection. For these reasons, perhaps, one sees the use of curses against theft erected most frequently in fields. These curses, made by specialists, are bamboo poles into whose cleft top are inserted the necessary combinations of magical objects. They are erected in fields where theft has occurred or where the owner fears such an occurrence. Once there, they are supposed to work automatically. A *thief* would develop leprosy or some other fatal or debilitating illness, and even the owner should call the specialist to remove the curse before harvesting the field. Although these curses are widely used, they seem actually to engender very little fear among most people. Certainly they in no way effectively stop pilfering. Many people are more resilient in the face of depredations and keep armed guard on their fields. A thief ought in the act runs the risk not only of having to pay a fine but also of being shot.

Another important food attitude is shown by the limited range of generosity in distributing it. An occasional guest in fed, but even enough anyone who is obviously sponging no longer asked to eat. In case a family runs short of corn or rice it has to buy or borrow from those who may have a surplus. But if food is borrowed, it is at rates of interest running as high as one hundred percent. This holds even between brothers. Thus Pomeni wanted a hundred-ear corn bundle. He got it from his brother but had to repay it at harvest time with two corn bundles of the same size. Even feasts, which at first blush appear to be generous food distributions, are far from lavish in actuality. Each female guest brings to the feast a contribution of food. Everything brought by guests is pooled with the hosts' contributions and then redistributed so that women may carry back home but little more than they brought in the first place. Of course they do receive meat in addition, but meat often the most common of only three or four cubes of boiled pork about two inches square. However, the quantities displayed are considerable and the hosts derive satisfaction therefrom.

I have been concerned with describing a series of childhood experiences and a series of institutionalized adult food attitudes. The experiences of individual children with respect to hunger, gratifications and disciplines vary greatly; it is to be expected, therefore, that in addition these cultural attitudes toward food will vary in "the depth or shallowness of meaning in the individual's total economy." Ishungwa began his autobiography with early memories of a period of hunger, whereas Tikyendo, who was the same age and of the same village, began the story of her childhood with quarrels between herself and other children.